

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1-15 (Canceled)

16. (Original) A method for preparing a spinal disc space between a pair of vertebral endplates for insertion of an implant therebetween, comprising:

 inserting a guide sleeve to the disc space from an anterior approach, the guide sleeve having a working channel providing access to a first disc space location and a second disc space location;

 distracting the disc space to a desired disc space height;

 preparing the first disc space location through the working channel for insertion of a first implant therein;

 inserting a reamer plug through the working channel into the first disc space location;

 preparing the second disc space location through the working channel for insertion of a second implant therein after inserting the reamer plug;

 inserting the second implant through the working channel into the second disc space

 location, the second implant being tapered to establish a desired lordotic angle between the vertebral endplates;

 removing the plug from the first disc space location after inserting the second implant;

and

 inserting the first implant through the working channel into the first disc space location, the first implant being tapered to establish a desired lordotic angle between the vertebral endplates.

17. (Original) The method of claim 16, wherein distracting the disc space includes:

 providing a first distractor having a first distractor tip;

 providing a second distractor having a second distractor tip and a recessed area extending along its length;

 positioning the second distractor adjacent the first distractor with the first distractor at least partially received in the recessed area of the second distractor; and

 inserting the distractor tips through the working channel into the disc space.

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Application Ser. No.: New Application

Atty Docket No. 4002-3366/PC361.16

Page 2 of 7

18. (Original) The method of claim 17, further comprising coupling the first and second distractors to the guide sleeve before distracting the disc space.
19. (Original) The method of claim 18, wherein distracting the disc space includes applying a driving force to the first and second distractors and the guide sleeve to insert the first and second distractor tips into the disc space.
20. (Original) The method of claim 19, further comprising applying a driving force only to the guide sleeve to advance the guide sleeve towards the disc space after the distractor tips are inserted in the disc space.
21. (Original) The method of claim 17, further comprising removing the first distractor from the working channel to form a substantially cylindrical working channel portion along the second distractor.
22. (Original) The method of claim 21, wherein preparing the first disc space location includes reaming the disc space through the working channel portion.
23. (Original) The method of claim 16, further comprising securing the reamer plug to the guide sleeve.

Claims 24-26 (Canceled)

27. (New) The method of claim 16, wherein inserting the first implant and inserting the second implant each include threadingly engaging the implant to the adjacent vertebral endplates.
28. (New) A method for preparing a spinal disc space between a pair of vertebral endplates for insertion of an implant therebetween, comprising:
 - accessing the disc space from an anterior approach;

distracting the disc space to a desired disc space height;
preparing a first disc space location for insertion of a first implant therein;
inserting a reamer plug into the first disc space location;
preparing a second disc space location for insertion of a second implant therein while maintaining the reamer plug in the first disc space location;
inserting the second implant into the second disc space location, the second implant being tapered to establish a desired lordotic angle between the vertebral endplates;
removing the plug from the first disc space location after inserting the second implant;
and
inserting the first implant into the first disc space location, the first implant being tapered to establish a desired lordotic angle between the vertebral endplates.

29. (New) The method of claim 28, wherein accessing the disc space includes inserting a guide sleeve to the disc space to provide a protected a working channel to the first disc space location and the second disc space location.

30. (New) The method of claim 29, wherein distracting the disc space includes applying a driving force to the first and second distractors and the guide sleeve to insert the first and second distractor tips into the disc space.

31. (New) The method of claim 30, further comprising coupling the first and second distractors to the guide sleeve before distracting the disc space.

32. (New) The method of claim 31, further comprising applying a driving force only to the guide sleeve to advance the guide sleeve towards the disc space after the distractor tips are inserted in the disc space.

33. (New) The method of claim 29, further comprising securing the reamer plug to the guide sleeve.

34. (New) The method of claim 28, wherein distracting the disc space includes:

- providing a first distractor having a first distractor tip;
- providing a second distractor having a second distractor tip and a recessed area extending along its length;
- positioning the second distractor adjacent the first distractor with the first distractor at least partially received in the recessed area of the second distractor; and
- inserting the distractor tips into the disc space.

35. (New) The method of claim 28, wherein preparing the first disc space location includes reaming the disc space.

36. (New) The method of claim 28, wherein inserting the first implant and inserting the second implant each include threadingly engaging the implant to the adjacent vertebral endplates.

37. (New) A method for distracting a spinal disc space, comprising:

- inserting the first and second distractors into a working channel of a guide sleeve with proximal ends of the distractors adjacent a proximal end of the guide sleeve; and
- side-loading a distractor driver cap onto the proximal ends of the first and second distractors and the proximal end of the guide sleeve with the first and second distractors in the working channel to secure the first and second distractors to the guide sleeve.

38. (New) The method of claim 37, further comprising coupling the first distractor with the second distractor before inserting the first and second distractors into the working channel.

39. (New) The method of claim 37, wherein each of the first and second distractors includes a shaft and a distractor tip extending distally from the shaft, each of the distractor tips including opposite first and second surfaces defining a distraction height.

40. (New) The method of claim 39, further comprising inserting the distractor tips in the spinal disc space with the first and second distractors secured to the guide sleeve.

41. (New) The method of claim 40, further comprising:

removing the distractor driver cap to uncouple the first and second distractors from the guide sleeve; and

advancing a distal portion of the guide sleeve into the spinal disc space while maintaining distraction with the first and second distractors.

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Application Ser. No.: New Application

Atty Docket No. 4002-3366/PC361.16

Page 6 of 7